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To: See List  
From: Marketing Research Department  
Subject: "Eye-Movement" Test:  
Two Merit Ads:  
'Smoke Cracked' and 'New Low Tar Entry'

Date: April 8, 1976  
cc: A. Blasmeyer  
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This study involved the use of the "eye-movement" technique. Male smokers were shown a series of twelve ads (as newspaper-page-size slides) and asked to read each one for as long or short a time as they liked, and then, by pushing a button, to move on to the next ad. The "eye-movement recorder" captured the exact path of the respondents' eyes as they perused the ads. Summaries of the paths traced by the eye for 'Smoke Cracked' and 'New Low Tar Entry' will be found on pp. 10 and 13 of the attached. "Smoke Cracked" succeeded better in obtaining the "logical flight paths" for the eye. Recall of the message of the ad was also significantly higher for 'Smoke Cracked' than for 'New Low Tar Entry'. Consonant with previous work, a big-headline, big-packs format offers us the greatest chance to be seen and remembered, and the message of the ad perused (you may have four to ten seconds of the reader's time, typically).

A note: This "eye-movement" technique is uniquely suited for special work on an ad hoc basis when we want to know if our idea of how an ad should be read is really happening: that is, do people read our ads the way we would like to be read, logically, in a particular flow, seeing what we want them to see. The technique involves the "eye-movement" part first and then obtains recall. If the recall is low, we can now know: was it low because they didn't even see what we hoped they would see, or was it low because they saw and it just didn't register? The creative use of this technique -- especially at the agency in the process of the early stages of the creative development -- are fully self-evident. It is a valuable objective tool, then, for specific needs of a highly diagnostic nature to explore many alternatives (heads, subheads, copy block, illustration, etc.) at a point in time early enough to use the data before significant media expenses are incurred.

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